# LECTURE V

## THE GOSPEL OF TOLSTOY THE APOSTLE

AT the age of fifty Tolstoy looked back on his life and found it meaningless, a sorry jest, "a foolish and a wicked joke." "Vanity of vanities," Tolstoy repeated with Ecclesiastes and with Schopenhauer: the game is not worth the candle; life is a business that does not pay expenses; it is a tragic failure.

Yet Count Tolstoy was distinctly not a failure, as the world counts failure. On the contrary, he was a brilliant success. The descendant of a distinguished family, with an enviable military record, an honored country gentleman of excellent health, with a family of seven admiring children and a devoted wife of remarkable intelligence and efficiency, a wealthy man, admired by all the world for his literary genius,—what could he desire that was not at his disposal? Tolstoy is not to be reckoned among those who scoff at a success which they have failed to achieve; who scorn the puzzles they find too difficult to solve; who turn their backs on the world because the world has already turned its back on them. It was *after* he had won the worldly game that he found it not worth playing.

The more he saw of life, and the more he thought about life, the less satisfied he became. "What is the meaning of it all?" he kept asking himself. He had six thousand *desyatins* of land in the government of Samara, and three hundred horses. Suppose he had sixty thousand *desyatins* and as many horses,—what then? He was a famous writer. But suppose he became still more famous: "more famous than Gogol, Pushkin, Shakespeare, Molière, than all the writers

in the world—well, what then?" What was it all about? Why should he, Count Lyof Tolstoy, with his thousands of acres, healthy, rich, admired, loved, possessing all the things his heart could desire; *why* should he be living at all? "Is there any meaning in my life which will not be destroyed by the inevitable death awaiting me?" Science answered all questions but this, the most important. Experimental science refused even to entertain it; and, if abstract philosophy recognized it, it found it an insoluble puzzle.

"I could find no reply. Such questions will not wait; they demand an immediate answer; without one it is impossible to live; but answer there was none. I felt that the ground on which I stood was crumbling, that there was nothing for me to stand on, that what I had been living for was nothing, that I had no reason for living." While Russia marveled at the genius revealed in Tolstoy's portrayal of Levin's spiritual anguish in "Anna Karenin," that genius himself battled with the same problems and, despairing of finding an answer, contemplated hanging himself from the cross-beam of the very study in which he had been composing his masterpieces, and "ceased to go hunting with a gun because it offered too easy a way of getting rid of life."

And then occurred a most remarkable conversion—a Russian conversion, which robbed Russia and the world of a master-novelist, but gave us all—who can tell?—perhaps something even greater. A deep change came in Tolstoy's life. Not a sudden change, but rather the clear recognition of a truth which must have been lurking in his inner nature during his whole life, which sent him away in disgust from the University of Kazan, which made him loathe himself after his periods of dissolute living and gambling at Yasnaya Polyana, which appears in all his works and is revealed in all his great characters, in Dmitri Olyenin, in

Prince Andrei and Pierre Bezukhoi, and especially in Konstantin Levin. Let us follow Tolstoy as he awakes to the light which had long glimmered within him, as he discovers for himself and proclaims to all men the true meaning of life.

Sated with human vanity and success, rich, distinguished, he had nevertheless contemplated suicide. "Yet how do other people of my class manage to live?" Tolstoy asked himself. He found four ways out. The first way consisted in being ignorant of the fact that life is an absurdity, vanity, and evil: "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise." That way was shut to Tolstoy, for he was already confronted with the problem of life. The second way out was to make the best of life as it is without thinking of the future. "But," says Tolstoy, "my imagination was too lively for that." The third way was the conclusion which the suicide draws, and this way Tolstoy understood and regarded as the worthiest, but for some reason he did not kill himself. The fourth way was to accept life as described by Ecclesiastes and Schopenhauer, and yet to live on, to wash, dress, dine, talk, and even write books. This position was revolting and painful to Tolstoy, but he adopted and maintained it.

"To see the inanity of life is a simple matter enough, and it has long been apparent to the simplest, but men have lived and still live on. Why is it that men live on?" Tolstoy asked again; and now he turned, not to his own class, but to the peasants. If life was unendurable to him, how could they bear it? They lacked the pleasures and comforts of the rich and the culture of the educated; their life was indeed a benighted and a hard life, yet they lived contentedly to a ripe old age. Tolstoy could not understand why those millions of human beings should endure their poverty when he found life in opulence intolerable. Surely, said Tolstoy, those

peasants must possess something which I and my class, the wealthy landowners, do not possess. There must be a real meaning in life for those peasants, and in their humble, ignorant way they must be able to see that meaning, otherwise they would not live so contentedly on their bread and onions. The peasants told him they tried to follow the law of God; but what could be the meaning of that law? The skeptic unbeliever Tolstoy found that here was another question he could not answer. Was it indeed possible that the secret of life's meaning lay in the pious beliefs of the Orthodox Church, which he, early in life, had discarded as dark superstitions? His family of course were religious enough, and as a writer of Russian life he had always taken an objective interest in the faith of the masses. But now the possible truth of this religion became to him personally a matter of life and death. The peasants seemed to have the secret; he, Tolstoy, would pause at nothing, would sacrifice all, if he could only gain the peasant's peace of soul, if he could attain the sense that life is worth while and not a shallow mockery. This was the first step in his conversion. He turned his back on all his wealth, on all his aristocratic past, on all his learning, science, and philosophy; he went back to the old religion, determined to live the orthodox, pious life of the peasant and learn God's law.

One may wonder, perhaps, how it could have been possible for a deep, cultured thinker like Tolstoy to return to the crass superstitions and ritual of the Russian Orthodox Church. In spite of the superstitious character of the peasant's piety, however, Tolstoy could not help recognizing its self-forgetting character, which somehow lifted it above all his self-centered learning and modern culture.

But, though he was giving the old faith a new trial, the inspiration to follow the law of God, which he got from the

peasants, could not long blind his keen eyes to the benighted stupidity of the orthodox theology. The peasant has no intellectual demands, Tolstoy reasoned; his religion is one of unthinking devotion to God. But my devotion to God must not outrage my active mind. The peasant's theology may contain absurdities,—they are not absurdities to him, and one story is as good as another. But I cannot be contented as long as my mind is called upon to believe in absurdities. "My position was terrible," he writes. "I knew that from the knowledge which reason has given man I could get nothing but the denial of life, and from faith nothing but the denial of reason, which latter was more impossible than the denial of life. . . . If I went by faith, it resulted that, in order to understand the meaning of life, I should have to abandon reason, the very part of me that required a meaning in life!"

But was it the peasant's belief, his theology, which gave him his peace of soul? Was it not rather his religion, his love of God, which his ignorant mind had translated in the terms of his superstitious theology? "The true office of any faith is to give to life a meaning which death cannot destroy. . . . Live to seek God, and life will not be without God." That same love of God, Tolstoy considered, which keeps the unthinking peasant orthodox, will lead me to understand perhaps more clearly the Gospel of Jesus. Thus my heart will worship God, and my intellect will honestly seek to understand His law. Accordingly Tolstoy turned with heart and soul to the critical study of the Bible, especially of the Four Gospels, and about the years 1880–81 we find him hard at work on his "Criticism of Dogmatic Theology" and on his own translation of the Gospels. His conclusion is that orthodox theology has distorted the simple, straightforward meaning of Christ's Gospel.

Now the fact that Church-Christianity misinterprets the Gospel of Christ was for Tolstoy no reflection on Christ's own teaching. The history of all religious faiths manifests the same degeneration, the same obscuring of their initial clarity in a fog of ritualism and misshapen theology; but to scorn the Bibles of humanity merely because men have distorted their message is utterly to miss the point. The Vedas, the Zend Avesta, the Old and New Testaments have given rise to superstitions because first of all they conquered the souls of men and changed their lives. But, Tolstoy maintains, Aristotle, Bacon, Comte never were and never will be subjected to superstitious distortions and excrescences precisely because they are insignificant, because they miss the truth of life, and can therefore never influence the mass of humanity. The true message of all great religions is this: "There is a God, the source of all; in man there is a particle of this divine element which he can either diminish or increase by his life; to increase this element man must suppress his passions and increase love in himself; the practical means to attain this is to act with others as one wishes others to act toward oneself." "True religion is the establishment by man of such a relation to the Infinite Life around him as, while connecting his life with this Infinitude and directing his conduct, is also in agreement with his reason and with human knowledge." Such is the true religion of Christ.

Before we can grasp this meaning, it is necessary that we recognize an idea which is plain to any one who reads the Gospels with an open mind. Jesus was not a theologian; His aim was to point out to man the way to God. It is not a dogmatic, intellectual, scientific doctrine about God which Jesus offers us; it is a new ideal of life. There is in all of us a spiritual nature, a sense of God and a love of God—we are all children of the same Father. But most of us are prodigal

sons; we have forgotten our divine origin and destiny, we have forsaken the home of our Father, and are wasting our substance in riotous living. Jesus would rouse this our dormant spiritual nature, inspire in us prodigals the desire to return to our Father; to find the meaning of life; to learn how we can live for God, for our souls. And Tolstoy devoted himself with double enthusiasm to finding what Jesus had to say about the life of the spiritually regenerated sinner, the man born anew.

Meanwhile his friends and admirers were troubled as they watched him forsaking literature and devoting himself to Bible study. His wife, the Countess, writes to her sister: "He reads and thinks till his head aches, and all to show how incompatible the Church is with the teaching of the Gospel. Hardly ten people in Russia will be interested in it; but there is nothing to be done. I only wish he would get it done quicker, and that it would pass like an illness!" And Turgenev, whose admiration for Tolstoy's literary genius was not affected by the fact that he could not get along with him personally, writes to his friend Polonsky: "It is an unpardonable sin that Lyof Tolstoy has stopped writing; he is a man who could be extraordinarily useful, but what can one do with him? He does not utter a word, and, worse than that, he has plunged into mysticism. . . . He has plunged headlong into another sphere; has surrounded himself with Bibles and Gospels in nearly all languages, and has written a whole heap of papers. He has a trunk full of these mystical ethics and of various pseudo-interpretations. He read me some of it, which I simply do not understand. . . . I told him, '*That* is not the real thing'; but he replied, 'It is just the real thing.' . . . Very probably he will give nothing more to literature; or if he reappears, it will be with that trunk." And from his death-bed Turgenev wrote him one

last pathetic appeal not to forsake the art which he had glorified. The letter illustrates so clearly the great hopes which Tolstoy's conduct was shattering, and likewise Turgenev's own nobility of soul, that I cannot refrain from quoting it here in full:

"KIND AND DEAR LYOF NIKOLAYEVITCH:

"I have long not written to you because, to tell the truth, I have been and am on my death-bed. I cannot recover: that is out of the question. I am writing to you especially to say how glad I have been to be your contemporary, and to express my last and sincere request. My friend, return to literary activity! That gift came to you from whence comes all the rest. Ah, how happy I should be if I could think that my request would have an effect on you! I am played out—the doctors do not even know what to call my malady, *névralgie stomacale goutteuse.* I can neither walk nor eat nor sleep. It is wearisome even to repeat it all! My friend—great writer of our Russian land—listen to my request! Let me know you have received this scrap of paper, and allow me once more cordially to embrace you, your wife, and all yours. . . . I can write no more. . . . I am tired."

All these protests were futile. Some readers of Tolstoy would even add that they were superfluous. In the spiritual condition in which he found himself, Tolstoy could no longer look at life as he had looked at it when he was writing his famous novels,—objectively, as a painter or a sculptor looks at his model, trying to recreate it, whether it be a beautiful, fresh, goddess-like form or the shriveled body of a hag. To Tolstoy life and the portrayal of life meant something different now, and if he had kept on writing in violence to his convictions, his work would doubtless have shown his insincerity. As a matter of fact, he had not abandoned his art;

he had simply gained a new conception of his art, and if he did not produce another "Anna Karenin," he produced other things, in their way perhaps equally great. In a word, he was growing spiritually. He was not like his friend, the poet Fet, who, as Tolstoy puts it, wrote at the age of sixteen, "The spring bubbles, the moon shines, and she loves me!" and who went on writing and writing, and at sixty wrote: "She loves me, and the spring bubbles and the moon shines!"

Certain it is that, as far as his fame and his influence on the world are concerned, Tolstoy did not cease growing after 1880; and as to his literary art, his play "The Power of Darkness"—to mention only one example—exercised on European literature an influence quite equal to that of his novels. One does not need to make a literary apology for the creator of characters like Akim or of scenes like that of Mitritch and the ten-year-old Anyutka or the finale of the drama. A notable English critic called "The Power of Darkness" "the great modern play, the great play of the nineteenth century." But Tolstoy's chief aim now was not to portray life objectively; he had a mission, and that mission was to understand and proclaim Christ's ideal of human life. If his friends and former admirers thought that he had turned his back on life, it was because they, and not he, misunderstood life's meaning. So he writes to Fet: "I reject neither real life nor the labor necessary for its maintenance; but it seems to me that the greater part of my life and yours is taken up with satisfying, not our natural wants, but wants invented by us, or artificially inoculated by our education, and that have become habitual to us; and that nine-tenths of the work we devote to satisfying these demands is idle work."

The fallacy of human life is this, and this only: that the average man devotes all his endeavors, energy, and thought

to devising ways and means of self-gratification and self-aggrandisement. Man seeks his own interest, his own pleasures, his own power; man thinks he can never be so happy as when he can enforce his will on the will of all other men. This egoism, this lust for self-assertion and self-indulgence, sexual, economic, political, intellectual, is responsible for the evils in life; this egoism poisons the family life and the social fabric of our civilization, and it makes thought lead to cynical pessimism instead of yielding spiritual peace. "We pierce mountains, we fly round the world," Tolstoy exclaims in "Life." "Electricity, microscopes, telephones, wars, parliaments, philanthropy, the struggle of parties, universities, learned societies, museums,—is this life? The whole of men's complicated, seething activity, with their trafficking, their wars, their roads of communication, their science and their arts, is for the most part only the thronging of the unintelligent crowd about the doorway of life." Now it is precisely in pointing out and correcting this evil, this fallacy of egoism, that Christ's new conception of life consists. "Whoso saveth his life shall lose it. And he that loseth his life for my sake, the same shall find it." That is, "only by renouncing that which is destined to perish, our animal personality, shall we acquire our true life which will not and cannot perish. Our true life begins only when we cease to count as life that which was not and could not be our life—our animal existence."

Like Plato, Tolstoy exalts reason above the appetites; but, like Christ, he finds the essential activity of the higher nature of man, not in the theoretic sphere, but in the sphere of self-forgetting affection. "Life is the activity of the animal personality subjected to the law of reason. Reason is that law to which, for its own happiness, the animal personality of man must be rendered subservient." These words

from "Life" might have been quoted from the "Republic," but the conclusion of Tolstoy's paragraph is a New Testament idea: "Love is the only reasonable activity of mankind." Jesus had said, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Confronted by the necessity of making a choice between his own and his neighbor's interests, Tolstoy would make Christ's dictum even more explicit and emphatic: "Love thy neighbor better than thyself." This is the gospel of Christ uttered in positive terms; its negative statement is the gospel of non-resistance.

To match the Decalogue of Mount Sinai, Tolstoy finds in the Sermon on the Mount five commandments which Jesus has stated with unquestionable clearness and simplicity, and which should be recognized as the foundation of the genuine Christian religion.

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment; but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment." This is a hard commandment,—so hard, indeed, that some wise theologians sought to improve on the words of Jesus by adding, after "whosoever is angry with his brother," the words, "without a cause," thus nullifying the force, and indeed the sense, of the whole passage. But Christ said simply: Anger in the heart is murder; be not angry. And when Jesus added the admonition against calling one's brother "Raca" or "Thou fool," he emphasized the moral claim which each man has upon us. We are not to excuse our anger and the evil we do to some men by saying that the object of our anger is a worthless or foolish man. "Treat every man always as an end, and never as a means only,"—to use the Kantian version of the same moral imperative.

The second commandment of Jesus stresses the spiritual

element in another department of life, and that one of the most intimate. Here again Jesus is perfectly clear: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." This, Tolstoy says, is Christ's clear message; it condemns lust unreservedly. All the glorification of passion, be it veiled in never so beautiful a manner, is at heart lust and opposed to Christ's teaching. It matters little whether a union of passion is sanctified by church or society, or is in secret or in frank defiance of social and religious conventions: it is all the same so long as it is not transfigured by a motive nobler than the motive of self-gratification. If the basis of a marriage is pleasure, that marriage is adultery in God's eyes; it is surely damned. So Tolstoy writes to his son Ilya, who is about to be married: "If one marries in order to enjoy oneself, no good will ever come of it. To set up as one's main object, ousting everything else, marriage, union with the being you love, is a great mistake. . . . Object, marriage. Well, you marry; and what then? If you had no other object in life before your marriage, it will be twice as fearfully hard, almost impossible, to find one. In fact, you may be sure, if you had no common purpose before your marriage, nothing can bring you together, you will keep getting further apart. Marriage can never bring happiness unless those who marry have a common purpose."

It is doubtful whether any other Tolstoyan doctrine has suffered as much misrepresentation as this idea in which, following Jesus, Tolstoy denounces sensuality. A survey of the shelves of public libraries finds no other work of Tolstoy's so dog-eared and thumb-soiled as "The Kreutzer Sonata," a book which some self-complacent guardians of

the public weal have regarded as a menace to social morals, and which thousands of greedy readers have professed to treat as an attack on the family. "The Kreutzer Sonata" is a plain-spoken work, and on that account shares with Ibsen's "Ghosts" and Shaw's "Mrs. Warren's Profession" the features objectionable to those who tolerate and indeed find pleasure in the appeal of gorgeously veiled salacity, but for whom the undisguised portrayal of naked, hideous vice is anathema. Tolstoy shows himself to be an enemy of vice, whether commercialized or sanctioned by society; he is an enemy of divorce in any form, but of lifelong marriage loyalty he is no enemy. Those who find in "The Kreutzer Sonata" an animal conception of the marriage relation and an insult to the higher nature of man miss utterly Tolstoy's point.

In his advocacy of this idea Tolstoy pauses at no conclusion. A man who has possessed a woman only physically has killed in her and in himself the spark of divine life. That life cannot be resurrected by mere remorse or by any material restitution; moral union alone can atone for the hideous wrong inflicted. The only salvation from the sin committed in betraying a human soul into a union of lust is to win that soul back through a moral union of lifelong loyalty. This idea is the fundamental theme of the novel "Resurrection."

Prince Dmitri Nekhludov, serving on a jury, is thunderstruck when he sets eyes on the person of the prisoner Katerina Maslova, a prostitute, accused of poisoning a merchant; for she is none other than a woman whom he had betrayed years ago. Of the murder charge she is innocent, but through a technical error she is condemned to four years in Siberia. Nekhludov determines to save her, to repair the wrong he has done her, to marry her. Thus far he follows the Tolstoyan text, while the official whom he apprises of his

intentions reflects: "There is something abnormal in the young men of to-day."

But she who had lost her virtue with such tragic suddenness is not so suddenly reclaimed, now that she has dwelt in the gutters of vice until her whole soul is prostituted. When he meets her in the prison, and in an outburst of heroic repentance begs her forgiveness, she smiles luringly at him, considering how she can best use him, and ends by asking him for ten rubles. There is no immediate reconciliation; Tolstoy is too great a realist to paint any such sentimentally easy triumphs of virtue. Maslova hates Nekhludov for torturing her soul with memories which she had buried forever. "You 've got pleasure out of me in this life, and want to save yourself through me in the life to come. You are disgusting to me—your spectacles and the whole of your dirty mug!" But his persistent, self-forgetting determination to atone for the wrong done her gradually melts the ice-caverns of that dreary soul; with imperceptible slowness the light of a new life begins to glimmer in the dim recesses of Maslova's being. After Nekhludov's third interview with her, the prostitute for the first time refuses to drink. "Well, shall we have a drop?" a fellow-prisoner asks her. "You have some," she answers. "I won't."

The struggle is long—it is at first a struggle between the prostitute and the long-buried woman in Maslova's soul. But as the prisoners approach Siberia a new struggle begins; a struggle in which new-born love for Nekhludov battles in her heart with a higher emotion, an emotion similar to Nekhludov's own feeling toward her, a passion of self-abnegation. For her sake, to atone for the wrong he had done her, to lift her, save her, make her life bright, Prince Nekhludov had negated his own aristocratic existence and forgotten all thoughts of self. The time will come when she will rise to

equal heights of self-forgetting devotion. Valdemar Simonson, who has fallen in love with her, asks her to marry him. She accepts him. "By going with Simonson, she thought she would be setting Nekhludov free, and felt glad that she had done what she meant to do; and yet she suffered at parting from him." Could one protest that this conclusion of the novel does not adhere literally to the second commandment of Jesus as formulated by Tolstoy?

The third commandment of Jesus affects the political sphere. "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths; but I say unto you, Swear not at all. . . . But let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay." This Tolstoy interprets as Christ's attitude toward government. Keep your spiritual freedom, Jesus says. God alone is your King. Do not today pledge yourself absolutely to duties and alliances of which your better conscience may not approve tomorrow. Do not surrender to another man the right to act at any future moment in accordance with your best light. Patriotic loyalty, one's oath to one's king, have led millions to kill each other in senseless wars. "The snare is in the use of God's name to sanction an imposture, and the imposture consists in promising in advance to obey the commands of one man, while I ought to obey the command of God alone. I know now that the most terrible evil in its consequences—murders in war, imprisonments, capital punishments—exists only because of the oath in virtue of which men make themselves instruments of evil, and believe that they free themselves from all responsibility. . . ."

The fourth commandment is: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies." Jesus here means to say, You have heard that love of your own

people, of your own country,—in a word, patriotism,—is good; but I tell you, love those of other nations, love all men. Elizabeth Barrett Browning has expressed her idea of true patriotism in a way quite Tolstoyan: "I confess that I dream of the day when an English statesman shall arise with a heart too large for England, having courage in the face of his countrymen to assert of some suggested policy: 'This is good for your trade; this is necessary for your domination; but it will vex a people hard by; it will hurt a people farther off; it will profit nothing to the general humanity; therefore away with it! It is not for you nor for me.' When a British minister dares speak so, and when a British public applauds him speaking, then shall the nation be glorious, and her praise, instead of exploding from within, from loud civic mouths, will come to her from without, as all worthy praise must."

But even more boldly Tolstoy writes: "I know now that my unity with others cannot be shut off by a frontier, or by a governmental decree which decides that I belong to this or that nation. I know now that all men are everywhere brothers and equals. When I think now of all the evil that I have done, that I have endured, and that I have seen about me, as the consequence of national enmities, I see clearly that it is all due to that gross imposture called patriotism and love for one's native land. . . . I understand now that true welfare is possible only on condition that I recognize my unity with the whole world. I believe this, and this belief has changed my estimate of what is right and wrong, important and despicable. What once seemed to me right and important—love for my country, love for my own nation, for my empire, services rendered at the expense of other men, military exploits—now seem to me repulsive and pitiable. What once seemed to me shameful and wrong—renunciation

of nationality and the cultivation of cosmopolitanism—now seem to me right and important." And after the Russo-Japanese war, Tolstoy wrote a letter to a Japanese in which he signed himself: "In spite of all external differences,—your loving brother, Lyof Tolstoy."

The fifth commandment, which I have reserved for the last, is to Tolstoy the most fundamental of all, and is the keystone of Christ's moral edifice. In his "Confession" the sudden realization of the importance of this command is compared to the finding of the central, important fragment of a broken statue about which all the other fragments can be assembled, each fitting into its proper place and all forming a unity. Thus the understanding of the fifth commandment becomes for Tolstoy the key with which he unlocks the ethics of Jesus and finds it to be a consistent, divine message of love to mankind:

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." "Do not use force," Tolstoy understands Jesus to say. Obviously no one will object to this commandment in so far as it involves using force wickedly; but what if one seeks to do good,—save a poor child from the attack of a drunken brute, or punish a criminal? Is the use of force even then to be condemned? Yes, Tolstoy maintains; that is exactly what Jesus means to say. What are his ideals? Love your neighbor as yourself; let your light shine before men. But if you have used force in compelling a bad man to desist from doing evil, have you made him less wicked? His own heart may be doubly full of hatred for you and for all men because of your use of force. Nor have you made yourself more Christlike when, in using violence, you have only allowed force and anger to

supplant love in your heart. What have you accomplished, then, by your use of force, if it has made the wicked man no better, and has made you worse? You have made the evil-doer externally safer, but can you be satisfied with this? Have you not insulted God's image in your fellow-man when, professing to save his soul, you have begun by endeavoring to make him harmless, thus treating him as a beast? But, you say, when I have once made him safe, then I can with security try to save his soul. This is mockery, Tolstoy says. An evil is an evil. You cannot get love out of hate; and where love is, there God is also. By force you can cow an evil-doer into submission, but you can get him freely to leave his evil ways and to follow God only by love. Do not under any conditions resort to violence; resist not evil. Only love can beget love. And, however we may extol justice, our law-courts and prisons and police systems do not have love as their basis: they are compounded of hatred, which is sometimes called righteous indignation; of the spirit of revenge, which is styled justice; and of the selfish desire of security for ourselves, which is collectively magnified into the virtue of public safety. But Tolstoy declares, as Dostoyevsky had declared before him, and as Jesus above all declared: "If any man would go to law with thee, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also."

It would be easy for us to take this doctrine of non-resistance to pieces, to show that a literal observance of it would undo the work of our entire civilization; that in a world in which knaves and idiots abound the use of force is indispensable; that by stretching the meaning of some Gospel passages we can show that even Jesus believed in the use of force. All this would be contemptibly easy, but it would only illustrate the truth that the letter killeth. Christ is not to be refuted by being proved impracticable; for it is

precisely against the worship of the brutally practicable that Christ revolted. Certainly this modern egoistic world is practicable; certainly it is practicable to imprison and to exile to Siberia gangs of men whom we haven't reformed or who haven't reformed us. Certainly it is practicable to employ the very best years of a nation's manhood in training men to kill other men similarly trained. Certainly it is practicable to make ninety-nine persons in a hundred labor in order that the remaining one may be kept in luxurious idleness. There is nothing impracticable in assuring the innocence and safety of our own sisters and daughters and at the same time providing ready means for gratifying our passion by licensing the prostitution of the daughters and sisters of the poor, who do not count. All these things are eminently practicable; but they are not on that account the less wicked. On the other hand, Socrates was decidedly impracticable when he preferred drinking poison to renouncing his convictions. And Jesus,—what was there practicable about his allowing himself to be crucified and thus have his doubtless promising career cut short at the early age of thirty-three? Perhaps he should have adapted himself to the actual world in which he lived, fought the world with its own weapons, just as most of us would have done, and have become high rabbi of some synagogue or some weighty Roman dignitary, instead of remaining merely the Saviour of Mankind.

"We may declare that the universal practice of such a rule is very difficult; we may deny that he who follows it will find happiness; we may say with the unbelievers that it is stupid, that Christ was a dreamer, an idealist who propounded impracticable maxims which his disciples followed out of sheer stupidity: but it is impossible not to admit that Christ expressed in a manner at once clear and precise what he wished

to say; that is, that according to his doctrine a man must not resist evil, and consequently that whoever adopts this doctrine cannot resist evil. And yet neither believers nor unbelievers will admit this simple and clear interpretation of Christ's words."

Tolstoy likewise is not an efficiency expert: he is a prophet of ideals, and an ideal is not to be estimated necessarily in terms of its expediency. Man's performance is always found to fall short of his ideals; and if at least in our ideals we cannot rise in aspiration above our sordid performance, then we are still children of darkness. Tolstoy's gospel, like that of Christ, is a revolt against the merely expedient; and whether we follow him or not, we must at least understand what the good man is about. This worship of expediency Christ came to upset and to put in its place the worship of God, who is not the ideal of efficiency but of holiness, who does not prudently remain with His ninety-nine sheep that are safe in the fold, but goes to hunt for the one lost sheep.

The practical, expedient philosophy of life, on the other hand, is in the eyes of Tolstoy responsible for our nasty world. This is why a few men and women die of idle banqueting, and a good many more of starvation. Tolstoy's "slumming" experiences in Moscow abundantly proved to him the impossibility of saving men from squalor and degradation merely by giving them money. Not all who are in the gutter find life there intolerable: therein is the first problem; and the second is that those who do find gutter life and slum life wretched are experiencing a misery which is within themselves, "a misery not to be mended by any kind of banknote." Condescending alms-giving cannot cure the ills of poverty, for it cannot save as many men from poverty as are daily made poor by the luxury of the rich, which luxury not

only impoverishes the masses, but also corrupts them, rousing in their souls greed and envy and distorted notions and dreams of happiness.

If poverty is not to be cured with bank-notes, even less does moral degradation yield to this superficial treatment. Here is a corrupt woman about to sell her thirteen-year-old daughter into a life of shame. Can this girl be saved from her fate by the police, or by kind, charitable society ladies? Tolstoy answers: "It was possible to take this girl away from her mother by force; but to convince that mother that she was doing wrong in selling her daughter was not possible. It would first be necessary to save this woman—this mother—from a condition of life approved by every one, and according to which a woman may live without marrying and without working, serving exclusively as a gratification to the passions. If I had thought about this, I should have understood that the majority of those ladies whom I wished to send here for the saving of this girl were not only themselves avoiding family duties and leading idle and sensual lives, but were consciously educating their daughters for this very same mode of existence. One mother leads her daughter to the inn, and another to the court and to balls. But the views of the world held by both mothers are the same; to wit, that a woman must gratify the lusts of men, and for that she must be fed, dressed, and taken care of. How, then, are our ladies to reform this woman and her daughter?"

These are hard words,—words which make one shrink with dismay; but is there more of error than of truth in them? The pursuit of pleasure and sensual enjoyment and idle luxury are not repellent to us only because we are intoxicated with the wine of wealth and do not realize the horror and duplicity of our lives. Consider, you good people who go to balls and brilliant receptions, Tolstoy exclaims in one

of his books; bethink yourselves—what are you about? Here are a hundred women at a royal ball. "Each of these women wearing one-hundred-and-fifty-ruble dresses has doubtless lived in the country and seen peasants, and knows her nurse and her lady's-maid who have poor fathers and brothers for whom to earn one hundred and fifty rubles to build a hut is the aim of a long and laborious life. She knows this; then how can she make merry, knowing that at that ball she carries on her bared body the hut which was the dream of her good maid's brother? But granting that this may not have struck her—the fact that velvets, silks, sweets, flowers, laces, and dresses do not grow of themselves, but are made by people, is one which it would seem she could not but know. One would think she must know what kind of people make these things and under what conditions they make them, and why."

But what is to be done? For this is the very title of the book from which I am quoting,—"What Is To Be Done?" Stop thinking of yourselves, Tolstoy says, stop thinking all the time of your needs, your desires, your pleasures, your so-called cultural demands, and think of your fellow-men! Still, you persist, what am I—I personally—to do? "People will go on buying and hiring, whether I do or not, and will buy and compel others to make velvets and sweets and cigarettes; and will go on hiring people to wash shirts even if I don't. Then why deprive myself of velvets and sweets and cigarettes and clean shirts, since things are so arranged? . . . What difference will it make if I wear my shirts a week and make my cigarettes myself or give up smoking? This difference: that some washerwoman or cigarette-maker will strain her strength less, and the money I should have paid for the washing and cigarette-making I can give to that washerwoman or even to quite other washerwomen and

workers who are weary of work, and who, instead of working beyond their strength, may then rest and get tea."

"But I hear in reply (so reluctant are the rich, luxurious people to understand their position): Even if I did agree to wear a dirty shirt and not to smoke, but to give the money to the poor instead, it would still not save the poor from being bled of all they possess, and my drop in the ocean will not help matters. . . . If I went among savages," Tolstoy answers, "and they treated me to tasty cutlets, and the next day I learned, perhaps saw, that these tasty cutlets were made of prisoners who had been chopped up to make them; then, if I considered it bad to eat people, however tasty the cutlets might be, and however general among those with whom I am living might be the custom of eating men, and however little the prisoners kept to serve as food might gain by my refusing a cutlet, still I should not and could not eat any more of them."

The Chinese say: If there is one man idle, there is another dying of hunger. This problem is quite simple and is made complicated only by those who do not wish to solve it. We can invent more and more efficient wage-systems, and more practicable methods of organized charity; we can keep a hundred poor people employed serving rich wines and viands on our table, and then allow one or two of them to feed on the crumbs, and count ourselves philanthropic. All this is hollow mockery. "If a horseman sees that his horse is tired out, he must not remain seated on its back and hold up its head, but simply get off." Feed the horse, to be sure, Tolstoy says, but first of all get off the horse's back! Make sure, above all, that in your own personal life you are not enslaving the life of some other man. Hurt no one, but, so far as lies in your power, help! Make other men work for

you as little as possible, and work as much as possible for yourself.

The realization of this truth of life Tolstoy compares to the experience of a man who, having started on a certain errand, finds out that it is useless and turns back home. "What was at first on his right hand is now on his left, and what was on his left hand is on his right." Heretofore he had thought only of himself, of his family, his class, his nation; now he will think of others, other men's families, the other classes of society, the other nations. Life will no longer be for him a bill of fare, but a call to service. No longer will he ask himself, How much can I get out of men? but, How much can I give to them? True charity, of course, is to be the goal; but before I can willingly help any one I must first of all be sure that I am not forcing some one else to serve me unwillingly. "It is true that all our interests are interwoven, but each man's conscience tells him without much reckoning to whose credit goes the work, and to whose the idleness. And not conscience alone tells one this: it is most clearly told by one's cash-book. The more money a man spends, the more work he obliges others to do for him; and the less he spends, the more he works."

The conclusion of Tolstoy's reasoning is clear. Men suffer and are depraved because some men are in bondage to others. Therefore, until this initial cause of misery is removed, all other remedies are futile. "If I wish to help the poor—that is, to make the poor cease to be poor—I ought not to create those same poor." "I go to help the poor. But of the two who is the poorer? No one is poorer than myself. I am a weak, good-for-nothing parasite, who can exist only under very peculiar conditions, who can live only when thousands of people labor to support this life which is not

useful to any one. And I, this very caterpillar which eats up the leaves of the tree, wish to help the growth and the health of the tree and to cure it."

This is the simple truth of the matter, according to Tolstoy, much as men try to evade it by vain philosophizing. Malthus would explain the misery of the poor in terms of some unchangeable laws for which no one is to blame, unless it be the starving working-people themselves. "Why do these fools come into the world when they know they will not have enough to eat?" Comte would describe humanity as an organism of which some people are presumably the lofty head and dainty palate, and others inevitably the weary, blistered feet, trudging along, supporting the whole. Hegelianism owes its initial success, Tolstoy believes, not so much to the harmonious perfection of its system as to this: that its explanation of the world and our life allowed men the opportunity of saying, "All is reasonable, all is good; nobody is to blame for anything." The advocates of "the division of labor" write as if, in uttering the charmed phrase, they have exhausted and solved the knotty problem of life, as if the further question did not yet remain, "Whether the now existing division of labor in human society is that division which ought to be."

Those who choose "mental and spiritual labor" demand as their due that, before yielding intellectual fruit, they be given, as it were on credit, the fruits of the physical labor of others. But what if every workman should say: "Before I go to work to prepare bodily food for you, I want the fruits of the spirit. In order to have strength for laboring, I require a religious teaching, the social order of common life, application of knowledge to labor, and the joys and comforts which art gives. I have no time to work out for myself a teaching concerning the meaning of life,—give it to me!"

Is the division of labor genuine? Does the scientist, the novelist, the poet, the musician, the artist serve directly the spiritual needs of the workers who directly satisfy his physical needs? When a scientist makes a catalogue of a million beetles, when an artist paints opulence, when a poet indulges his sophisticated fancy, and all consume the product of the peasants' work, is there a real, actual exchange of labor in the process? To say nothing of the purity—*i.e.,* uselessness —of science which so frequently is its boast,—"tell a painter to draw penny pictures, tell a musician to teach countrywomen to sing songs, tell a poet to throw aside his poems and novels and satires, and to compose song-books for the people and stories and tales which might be intelligible to ignorant persons,—they will say you are cracked."

The view and the estimate of art which Tolstoy holds in his essay "What is Art?" is a direct corollary of the above. Great art is measured by its capacity to communicate itself to universal humanity: not to some sophisticated coterie, not to some one class of people, but to man and woman in their simplicity and humility of soul. "Art is not a pleasure, a solace, or an amusement; art is a great matter. Art is an organ of human life, transmitting man's reasonable perception into feeling." And a work of art which refuses to perform this chief function for a part—and that the greater part—of the human race, is bad art, even though it may enjoy the highest praises of those who, in appreciating it, aristocratically isolate themselves from the crude, unlettered millions.

Tolstoy applies his criterion mercilessly. That a Baudelaire, a Verlaine, an Ibsen, a Maeterlinck, a Burne-Jones, a Boecklin, a Richard Strauss are to be ruled out; that subtle notions, sophisticated, supersensitive, or distorted feelings, beauty-hunting, pleasure-sated prodigality athirst for new

sensations, and discontented, introspective idleness,—that these would be rejected by Tolstoy is a foregone conclusion. But Shakespeare suffers, and "Don Quixote," and the later work of Beethoven, and especially Wagner, and most of the painters accounted great. On the other hand, the great Bibles of the world endure the test, and Schiller's "Robbers," and "Les Misérables," and "The Christmas Carol," and "Adam Bede," and "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and Dostoyevsky; but, of Tolstoy's own work, discarding "War and Peace" and "Anna Karenin," barely two short stories are saved: "God Sees the Truth" ("The Long Exile"), as belonging to religious art, "transmitting feelings of love to God and one's neighbor," and "The Prisoner of the Caucasus," as an example of universal art, "transmitting the very simplest feelings common to all men." Thus, for Tolstoy, "the destiny of art in our time is to transmit from the realm of reason to the realm of feeling the truth that well-being for men consists in being united together, and to set up, in place of the existing reign of force, that kingdom of God—*i.e.,* of love—which we all recognize to be the highest aim of human life."

Tolstoy asks himself, How can I, Lyof Tolstoy, save others from being my servitors? I can take care of my own room; I can clean my boots—indeed, I can make my own boots; I can go into the fields and by honest labor produce the equivalent of the food which I consume. And only *after* I have done this shall I have a right to offer my help to my fellow-men without feeling like a robber who returns part of the booty. And the work which I do must be of a sort which will relieve some of the common people from doing that work for me, for I cannot save my fellow-man who produces and makes my bread by philosophizing in his place. Nor do I, in so doing, reject in any way the true dignity of

mental work. The maximum time I can spend in really profitable mental work is five hours. I sleep eight hours. What do I do with the remaining eleven hours? Let me, during that time, relieve the peasant in his manual labor; let me allow him a chance to think at least half an hour.

Still, what was Tolstoy to do with his property, with his thousands of *desyatins* of land, with his copyrights? Was he justified in simply giving away all his estate to the poor? That would have compelled his wife and family to abandon their rich life and follow him, contrary to their convictions, perhaps,—and compulsion is wrong, according to Tolstoy. Besides, his wife had helped increase his wealth: he could not give away her and her children's share. He himself, on the other hand, could no longer hold to his wealth and remain honest with himself. Tolstoy accordingly gave up all rights to his estate, handed it over to his wife to manage as she saw fit. In his own house he remained a guest; each day he devoted several hours to manual labor, earning his bread directly. He continued to write, but declared all his works free of copyright, free for any one to publish and circulate among men. Only when the Dukhobors faced punishment and exile because they regarded military service as contrary to the Christian religion and refused to enter the army, Tolstoy used his novel "Resurrection" to raise funds with which to enable them to emigrate to Canada, where freedom was promised them.

So we find Tolstoy writing "Popular Legends," simple stories of charity and forgiveness, and also criticisms of life, candid, penetrating, pitilessly sincere. In "Neglect a Fire and it Spreads," anger and hatred and rancor lead to the mutual destruction of two peasants' households. The shoemaker Martuin Avdyeitch, in "Where Love is, There God is Also," hears in his dreams the promise of Christ to visit

him, and his day of expectation is a Tolstoyan illustration of the verse, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." "Master and Man" is a larger canvas: a landed proprietor of utterly selfish character is caught in a snowstorm, and attempts to save his own life by escaping on horseback, leaving his coachman to freeze to death. After long wandering, the animal brings him back to the carriage he has abandoned. He finds his coachman almost frozen. Moved by a sudden outburst of humanity, he prostrates himself over the freezing figure and thaws it back to life with the warmth of his own body. When the rescuing party finds him, he has frozen to death, but the coachman is saved.

It would be wrong to think that these are mere tracts: some of the later stories of Tolstoy are veritable literary gems. The finale of the short classic "God Sees the Truth," in which Aksenov's spirit of forgiveness conquers the criminal Makar, causing him to confess his misdeeds, exculpate Aksenov and secure his release, is a bit of genuine pathos: "When the order came to let Aksenov go home, he was dead." The spirit of the Bible is in these stories, and there is Biblical simplicity in the narratives, and a Biblical verisimilitude. Avdyeitch the shoemaker, waiting for Christ, watches the passing crowd. "Two soldiers passed by; one wore boots furnished by the crown, and the other one boots that he had made. Then the master of the next house passed by in shining goloshes . . ." and so forth, all from a veritable cobbler's viewpoint, requiring no commentary, and itself being the very essence of realism.

But there is criticism also, acute criticism, and very thinly disguised. The portrait in "A Candle," of the overseer who oppresses the peasants and compels them to break God's law by plowing on Easter Sunday, is a bold parable.

If rebel violence is not commended by Tolstoy, little doubt is left as to the identity of the overseer, and ominous is the description of the punishment which God inflicts on Michail Semyonovitch. Regicide is condemned, but tyranny is even more clearly denounced. The pithy "Skazka" requires no foot-notes. Ivan the Fool does all the work, his two brothers scorn him for his crude manners, but live and prosper at his expense. A time comes when Ivan is made Czar, and instead of laws and regulations, one simple rule suffices in his czardom: "Whoever has callous hands, comes to the table; whoever has not, gets what is left." One wonders how the censor, who mutilated "What is Art?" and forbade the publication of Tolstoy's religious writings, allowed this menacing prophecy to appear in its entirety. Perhaps we have here another illustration of the point mentioned in our first lecture: even bold fiction passes in Russia where serious exposition is forbidden; for—who knows?—perhaps the mass of readers would miss the point, perhaps the censor himself missed it. Meanwhile, literature, the novel, still remains Russia's chief channel of spiritual self-analysis.

The consciousness of death is clearly present in Tolstoy's later stories. He pictures it from various angles, and each portrayal of death is a criticism of life. Ivan Ilyitch dies as he has lived. A meaningless conclusion of an empty life, his death is merely an incident in the *tchinovnik* sphere of selfish ambition in which he has moved. Just as he had advanced in rank over the corpses of his older colleagues, so the younger men in his office anticipate the moving-up process after his own routine alphabet of life has reached its futile omega. In "Three Deaths," an aristocratic lady, an old peasant, and a tree complete the same cycle of existence and pass into the unknown.

What unknown? About the question of immortality,

Tolstoy's view passes from negatively inclined skepticism to reverent agnosticism, which tends toward the end to reach a level of devoted hopefulness. "It is impossible to receive faith from any one; it is impossible to convince oneself of immortality. In order to have faith in immortality it is necessary that the latter should exist; and in order that the latter should exist it is necessary to understand one's life in that in which it is immortal. Only he can believe in a future life who has performed his work of life, who has established in that life that new relation to the world which does not as yet find a place in the world."

Bravely Tolstoy championed his gospel of love of others, and opposed all use of force and all egoism. Thousands of men read his works, were converted to his view of life, and tried to follow him in the path of God. Holy Russia excommunicated him, the government of the Czar punished, imprisoned, exiled his followers, but dared not—literally dared not—touch this man of God, as witness his letters to the Russian Ministers of Justice and of the Interior. Still he did not feel satisfied with himself. Still he thought that he was not living as unselfishly as he ought. In the year 1897 he wrote the following letter to his wife and put it among his papers, asking that it be delivered to her after his death:

"My dear Sonya:

"I have long been tormented by the incongruity between my life and my beliefs. To make you change your way of life, your habits, which I taught you myself, was impossible; to leave you has so far also been impossible, for I thought that I should be depriving the children, while they were still young, of the influence, however small, which I might have over them, and should be causing you pain. But to continue

to live as I have been living these sixteen years, at one time struggling and harassing you, at another yielding to those influences and temptations to which I was accustomed and by which I was surrounded, has also become impossible for me at last; and I have made up my mind to do what I have long wished to do,—to go away; . . . for I, who am now entering on my seventieth year, long, with all the strength of my spirit, for that tranquillity and solitude and, though not perfect accord, still something better than this crying discord between my life and my beliefs and conscience."

Thirteen years more elapsed before Tolstoy actually fled from his house to seek peace with God. It is not our province here to recite the immediate strain and trouble which determined Tolstoy's flight, nor the tragic conditions which made his death, not one of peaceful solitude, as he desired it to be, but the most abominably published and moving-pictured event in the world. Nor is it for us to criticize as mistaken this last act of self-abnegation on the part of a man who had spent thirty years seeking to do, not his own will, but the will of God.

Was he right? Was he wrong? That no one man can decide. Tolstoy's gospel is not beyond criticism, but perhaps the Gospel of Jesus itself is not beyond criticism. Tolstoy preached, and tried to practise, the religion of consistent love of men; he tried to stop making his fellow-men his slaves, and to make himself their fellow-worker. Some of those who call themselves followers of Tolstoy have acted as if the outward expressions of his ideal of life, which suited his case, exhausted his gospel; as if the sage of Yasnaya Polyana merely taught men to wear grimy blouses, chop wood, plow the fields, and avoid the use of money. The story is told of an Englishman who became a Tol-

stoyan and would not touch money, but asked his wife to sign his checks for him, and had a secretary going about buying the things he wanted and paying for his railway tickets. And there are many more who fail to understand Tolstoy's gospel because they cannot get past their objections to his own perhaps eccentric methods of preaching that gospel. "I shall soon be dead," he sadly predicted, "and people will say that Tolstoy taught men to plow and reap and make boots; while the chief thing that I have been trying so hard to say all my life, the thing I believe in, the most important of all, they will forget." And this most important thing is the truth that selfishness which exploits others is the source of evil, and that self-sacrificing love for others is the highest good. Tolstoy advocated the denial of the powers of darkness within us: anger, lust, desire to oppress, exploitation—in a word, egoism.

This ideal of life may not be practicable, it may not be expedient, it may not be even scientific, as some people say that Nietzsche's ideal of proud self-assertion is scientific, but Tolstoy believed that it was the ideal which Jesus advocated. And upon those who call themselves Christians the necessity is imposed of determining whether Tolstoy was as intimate an acquaintance of Jesus as are those others of his professed servants who do not find it inconsistent with His gospel to sanctify the marriage of the same dissolute man to several different women, one after another, provided only that they believe that Jesus of Nazareth was conceived immaculately; who are quite able so to twist the meaning of the Book of Life that poor men and bad men and men of other races and nationalities will be kept "where they belong," provided only that they themselves continue to believe in the literal, divine inspiration of the Bible; who are able in a thousand churches and cathedrals to pray to the God of Love and

Peace to help their armies kill the armies of their enemies, so long as they assert the dogma that God is Three-in-One and created the world out of nothing.

The average man is much bolder and much more resolute in his beliefs than in his daily conduct. Most men seem quite ready to include any number of doctrines in the creed which is to obtain for them eternal happiness, if only they are allowed to retain hold of their purse-strings, if only their course of life is not interfered with. But Tolstoy heard Jesus say to him: It is not enough that you have read the law and the prophets: give all you have to the poor and follow me. He found that the religion of Jesus as well as all other great religions are religions of life, not theologies. He tried to rid his soul of anger, lust, violence, and selfishness, and to love and help his fellow-men. And the Russian Orthodox Church declared him an enemy of God because he did not believe in miracles, because he rejected the dogmas of the Trinity and the Divine Birth, and could not be dogmatic about the immortality of the soul.

Who can judge his life? The upholders of orthodoxy? But in "Three Hermits" the bishop who tries to teach the simple, untutored eremites how to pray to God in the approved manner finds that the Lord's Prayer overtaxes their memory and does not inspire religious devotion. And he is wise and pious enough to grant them the privilege of praying to God in their own simple way: *"Troe vas, troe nas, pomiluy nas!"* ("You three have mercy on us three!") This is a hint to the upholders of orthodoxy. The story "The Two Old Men" impresses me as a Tolstoyan "Apologia pro Vita Sua," brief, simple, addressed to us all. Two peasants, Yefim and Yelisei, set out on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. But Yelisei is diverted from his holy journey by the call of mercy and, having spent on a poor family all the

money which he had saved for his pilgrimage expenses, finds himself obliged to return home. Yefim proceeds on his way, suspicious of strangers and coldly calculating from beginning to end. But when he finally stands in orthodox devotion before the Holy Sepulcher, behold! Yelisei has reached there before him. It is Yefim's vision, of course, and it is Tolstoy's parable, but the message of both is unmistakable.

And it is Tolstoy's message to the world: "God bids every one do his duty till death—in love and good deeds."

RADOSLAV ANDREA TSANOFF.


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